

him for his congratulations and his warm words. I look forward to working in conjunction with him as we move to pass 12 bills by June.

I want to particularly say how pleased I am to be able to work with the ranking member, my colleague from Texas. We have worked on issues in the past, never at this level, but I am looking forward to a really close and wonderful relationship as we try to do the Nation's business. Thank you so very much.

Mr. Speaker, with an additional week to negotiate, I am optimistic that we can fund the government for this year and we can deliver coronavirus relief for the American people who are desperate and looking to us for hope.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this extension of funding so we can complete our work. It is not about us. We have the responsibility, but it is about the people outside of this Chamber who are relying on us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 8900.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 965, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

REAFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO MEDIA DIVERSITY

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 549) reaffirming the commitment to media diversity and pledging to work with media entities and diverse stakeholders to develop common ground solutions to eliminate barriers to media diversity.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 549

Whereas the principle that an informed and engaged electorate is critical to a vibrant democracy is deeply rooted in our laws of free speech and underpins the virtues on which we established our Constitution, "in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity . . .";

Whereas having independent, diverse, and local media that provide exposure to a broad range of viewpoints and the ability to contribute to the political debate is central to sustaining that informed engagement;

Whereas it is in the public interest to encourage source, content, and audience diver-

sity on our Nation's shared telecommunications and media platforms;

Whereas the survival of small, independent, and diverse media outlets that serve diverse audiences and local media markets is essential to preserving local culture and building understanding on important community issues that impact the daily lives of residents;

Whereas research by the American Society of News Editors, the Radio Television Digital News Association, the Pew Research Center, and others has documented the continued challenges of increasing diversity among all types of media entities;

Whereas with increasing media experience and sophistication, it is even more important to have minority participation in local media to ensure a diverse range of information sources are available and different ideas and viewpoints are expressed to strengthen social cohesion among different communities; and

Whereas the constriction in small, independent, and diverse media outlets and limited participation of diverse populations in media ownership and decisionmaking are combining to negatively impact our goal of increasing local civic engagement and civic knowledge through increased voter participation, membership in civic groups, and knowledge of local political and civil information: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its commitment to diversity as a core tenet of the public interest standard in media policy; and

(2) pledges to work with media entities and diverse stakeholders to develop common ground solutions to eliminate barriers to media diversity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) and the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 549.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 549, reaffirming the commitment to media diversity and pledging to work with media entities and diverse stakeholders to develop common ground solutions to eliminate barriers to media diversity.

This resolution promotes much-needed diversity in the communications marketplace, and I commend Representative DEMINGS and her staff for all their efforts towards this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank Ranking Member WALDEN, Communications and Technology Subcommittee Chairman DOYLE, and Subcommittee Ranking Member LATTA for their work to bring this resolution to the floor.

This past year has highlighted racial inequities that have long existed in our

society, as we saw with the protests over the murder of George Floyd and the disparate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on communities of color.

These inequities also exist in our communications marketplace. For example, the owners of broadcast and media outlets do not reflect our diverse population. These media outlet owners make critical decisions about the educational, political, entertainment, and news programming Americans watch, and those decisions can influence people's opinions and perceptions.

Diversity in viewpoints and diverse ownership of media outlets promotes programming that offers different perspectives and enables viewers to access programming that is relevant to them.

A diverse media marketplace is also central to an informed and engaged electorate, which is critical to a vibrant democracy.

Committing to a diverse media marketplace, one that reflects our country, is a worthy goal, and this resolution reaffirms that goal.

Today's resolution is a good step forward, but there is much more that we need to do. The numbers and statistics are clear that our media marketplace does not resemble the people we serve.

I hope we can come together to do the additional work that is needed, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 549. This is a resolution introduced by my colleague, Mrs. DEMINGS, that reaffirms the commitment by Congress to work with media entities and diverse stakeholders to find common ground solutions to eliminate barriers to diversity in our media.

As a former radio broadcaster myself, I understand the efforts that the broadcast industry, and the media industry as a whole, takes to ensure diversity of ownership, viewpoint, and employment. My wife and I had to make those hiring decisions for our five radio stations. I know firsthand the business imperative to serve your community with local news and local programming that reflects the makeup of your community.

While today's resolution focuses specifically on broadcast stations, this problem is not unique to one segment of the media industry; it is also an issue for their cable and digital streaming competitors in the marketplace.

I appreciate the many steps that the industry has taken, not only to recognize and take responsibility for this, but also to put in place the many programs and initiatives to promote opportunities for women, minorities, and veterans. But as the data show, we still have room for improvement.

While the House is considering this resolution today, it is my hope that we

can work together in a bipartisan manner to address the inequality identified in this resolution.

Republicans on the Energy and Commerce Committee have put forward solutions to help uplift minority voices and promote media diversity, solutions that can actually become law, unlike this resolution before us today.

Mr. Speaker, in September, the House passed H. Res. 5567, the MEDIA Diversity Act sponsored by Mr. LONG, which would help us better understand the market and regulatory barriers for socially disadvantaged individuals to enter and compete in the marketplace. This bill would help us make informed policy decisions.

I have also worked with advocates and industry alike to try to find consensus on legislation to establish the long-sought broadcaster incubator program. Now, this would help increase the number of minority-owned broadcast stations.

The Broadcast Diversity in Leadership Act, H.R. 8154, would encourage large, established broadcasters to work with aspiring broadcasters to break down barriers to capital and provide mentorship and experience to new, minority entrants. That is how we can ensure their long-term success in serving their local communities. We must better understand the problem before us and how best to incentivize all media entities to create opportunities for and lift the voices of underrepresented individuals.

Today, we can affirm our commitment to working toward common ground solutions, as this solution states; but Republicans stand ready to work across the aisle to turn these common ground solutions into law.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS), the sponsor of this resolution.

Mrs. DEMINGS. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member for their support on this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that media plays a critical role in how we see the world and how we see each other. When a child sees someone on the screen who looks like them, it can change their life.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, we continue to struggle with ongoing disparities in housing, education, social justice, and even this ongoing pandemic. Whether in news, movies, TV, or music, who tells the story matters because diverse perspectives are critical to us understanding the entire story.

I am grateful for our cosponsors and for my colleagues who will vote for this resolution today, and for the media representatives who partnered with us to move this legislation forward. As we continue to work together to unite our country, break down barriers, and strengthen our future, let's continue to

utilize the powerful diverse voices who truly are our strength.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their support on this resolution.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA), the top Republican on the Communications and Technology Subcommittee.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 549. This resolution reaffirms the importance of having diverse representation across the media to better reflect their audience and serve the public interest. I urge my colleagues to support this pledge to eliminate barriers to media diversity and to reinforce our commitment to encourage diversity in media policy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to spend the remainder of my time to commend the leadership of my good friend, the ranking member, Mr. WALDEN. Unfortunately, Leader Walden has decided to make this his last term in Congress, but his work at the Energy and Commerce Committee and his service to the people of Oregon will continue to positively impact our Nation for decades to come. It is going to be hard to imagine going to the committee without him at the helm on our side.

You have been a steady force, just as your family, who has been a steady force when they took those wagon trains to Oregon on that trail back in 1845. You have never forgotten your roots, and you show that every day. I appreciate it because I know, under your leadership, you have helped many of us in committee. And I know, as your vice chair, you had a lot of confidence in me when you let me take over the helm on many a day and run the committee.

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But as one of your subcommittee chairs on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection and this Congress being the ranker on Communications and Technology, I appreciate that.

And I know that, again, when I think about all of the things that you have worked on, especially in the last Congress and with the opioid epidemic, which claimed over 73,000 lives in this country, and you were at the helm of H.R. 6 and brought together all those bills, over 60 pieces of legislation to help people in this country. And that is going to be a lasting legacy that we are going to have.

So, again, we are going to appreciate you, but we also hate to see you leave.

And also, with all your telecom work, to have someone with that experience, as you mentioned in your opening remarks about you and your bride of 38 years, Mylene, owning the radio stations and being able to get out there and get the work done.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATTA) an additional 1 minute.

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, again, it has been a tremendous run with all the work that you have done. You have been a gentleman and a good friend.

Something I learned from my dad from his 36 years in public service, and I will say it again on this floor. He said there is a difference between people who are politicians and public servants. He said a politician is a person who sees how much they can take from the people they represent for their own benefit, while a public servant sees how much they can give of themselves back to the people they represent.

For what you have done for not only your constituents of your great State but also here in this body, we are going to miss you.

So, GREG, and that is the first time I have ever used a first name on this floor, we are going to miss you. I am going to miss you, but we wish you all the best in the years to come.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I believe we had two other speakers planning to come down and speak, but it does not appear they have been able to free themselves from their other business.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage us all to support this very strong resolution that our colleague has offered up, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask for support on this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 549.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RELIABLE INVESTMENT IN VITAL ENERGY REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3361) to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to reauthorize hydroelectric production incentives and hydroelectric efficiency improvement incentives, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3361

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Reliable Investment in Vital Energy Reauthorization Act" or the "RIVER Act".

SEC. 2. HYDROELECTRIC PRODUCTION INCENTIVES AND EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS.

(a) HYDROELECTRIC PRODUCTION INCENTIVES.—Section 242 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15881) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c), by striking "10" and inserting "22";